

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

# AIR-SEA BATTLE AND THE U.S. REBALANCE TO THE PACIFIC

by

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A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

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28 March 2016

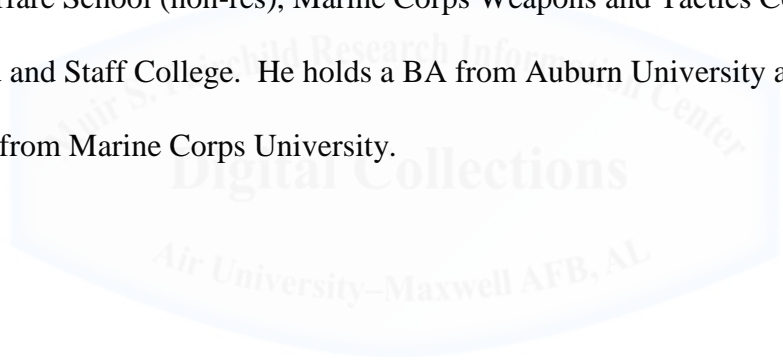
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## **Biography**

LtCol Robert Finneran is assigned to the Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL. LtCol Finneran has served in the Marine Corps for over 20 years primarily as an AH-1W pilot. He has completed three operational tours including four deployments with two tours in Iraq and one tour in Afghanistan. LtCol Finneran's last assignment was as Commanding Officer of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 167 (HMLA-167). His non-operational tours include an instructor tour at MAWTS-1 (Marine Corps Aviation's weapons school) and a tour as a requirements officer at HQMC (Aviation). LtCol Finneran's military education includes the Marine Corps Basic Officer Course, Naval Flight School (distinguished graduate), Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School (non-res), Marine Corps Weapons and Tactics Course, and Marine Corps Command and Staff College. He holds a BA from Auburn University and a Masters in Military Studies from Marine Corps University.



## **Abstract**

Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2AD) is an all too present challenge to U.S. Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC). The Air-Sea Battle operational concept is an integrally nested component of JOAC with the intent of assisting Combat Commander's and the Joint Staff on the approach to defeat A2/AD challenges and facilitate operational access in a contested environment. While it is understood that China is not an identified adversary, it would be in the U.S. best interest to acknowledge China as the obvious "pacing" threat based on capability, capacity and intent. Other potential adversaries such as Iran and Russia certainly pose a challenge to U.S. power projection but not nearly on the scale as China in the Western Pacific. As the U.S. strategy of rebalancing to the Pacific matures, it is imperative that the U.S. pay particular attention to the anti-access environment that the Chinese are capable of creating and use this as the baseline for a realistic operational approach to A2/AD in the near future.

## **Introduction**

In 2009, the Secretary of Defense ordered the Departments of the Navy and Air Force to develop an operational concept to counter the growing Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) threat to freedom of access to the global commons.<sup>1</sup> This operational concept, called Air-Sea Battle (ASB) combined with new strategic guidance *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* would enable the United States to continue to project power globally amid emerging A2/AD capabilities amongst potential U.S. adversaries.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, in late 2011, the President of the United States' announced his decision to rebalance U.S. presence to the Asia-Pacific region following over a decade of strategic focus on the Middle East. Finally, in January 2012, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff introduced the Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC) that would function as the umbrella concept for operational access in support of

broad national objectives. JOAC now serves as the overarching approach to the challenge of access whereas ASB would nest into JOAC to provide more specificity necessary to combat emerging A2/AD capabilities.<sup>3</sup> According to the ASB office, “The ASB Concept is a limited but critical component in a spectrum of initiatives aimed at shaping the security environment.”<sup>4</sup> As Admiral Greenert and General Schwartz describe, the ASB concept is designed to inform the joint force in the way they organize, train, and equip to provide combatant commanders the capabilities needed to gain and maintain access in support of their respective operational plans.<sup>5</sup>

In January of 2015, reports surfaced that the Pentagon had ordered a change that would move the efforts of the ASB Office under the purview of the Joint Staff (J7) Joint Force Development Directorate to re-write the ASB concept and has been drafted under the name Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Common or JAM-GC. While now late in the concept writing process, the transformation from ASB to JAM-GC provides an opportunity to conduct a thorough scope review to determine how this operational concept appropriately nests into JOAC and to determine what level of specificity is required to make this concept value added to the Joint Staff and Geographic Combatant Commanders. If JOAC is meant to maintain operational access in support of broader strategic objectives, then JAM-GC would seemingly be best suited to tackle more specific regional A2/AD challenges thereby informing and arming decision-makers with more efficacy to determine where to direct resources to counter these challenges. To provide the specificity to counter emerging adversaries it is necessary for the JAM-GC concept to develop capabilities to counter a “pacing threat” in a region of vital U.S. interests. President Obama’s decision to rebalance resources to the Asia-Pacific region is a clear indicator of this region’s importance to U.S. interests. According to the National Security Strategy (NSS), the U.S. political end-state in the region is that “American leadership will

remain essential to shaping the region's long-term trajectory to enhance stability and security, facilitate trade and commerce through an open and transparent system, and ensure respect for universal rights and freedoms.”<sup>6</sup> More relevant to this discussion is the fact that the Asia-Pacific region is also home to the U.S. nearest military competitor in the form of China. As Shawn Brimley describes, “...to the degree that military planners worry about what war looks like in a world of guided munitions, China is most certainly a “pacing threat”—that is, an actor that is making the most progress toward plausibly contesting U.S. defense strategy in a particularly worrisome way.”<sup>7</sup> When combined, the importance of the Asia-Pacific region to U.S. national interests and the fact that China is acknowledged as the pacing military threat to U.S. access, it becomes apparent that an operational concept is more valuable to decision-makers when such a concept has more focus and is less “generic” and theoretical. The following sections will establish a baseline understanding of the A2/AD problem, the current ASB concept, and provide a context of the strategic environment in the Asia-Pacific region from both the U.S. and Chinese perspective. Ultimately, this paper concludes that the most effective operational concept is one that will inform the joint force and combatant commanders of the capabilities necessary to counter a specified adversary and establish operational access required to support regional objectives.

## **Thesis**

With the implementation of JOAC as an overarching approach to U.S. operational access, it is necessary for the ASB concept (and subsequently the JAM-GC) to focus on detailing the specific capabilities, and counters thereto, of a pacing threat to U.S. global presence, namely China. This *regional* approach will serve to inform joint force development and integration

more substantially in a manner that is necessary to direct U.S. strategy of power projection in an area important to U.S. national interests.

### **Understanding Anti-Access/Area Denial**

The genesis of the Air-Sea Battle operational concept was the increase in A2/AD capability by potential adversaries such as China, Iran, and Russia. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the problem before developing an operational concept to solve it. While often lumped together, anti-access and area denial are two distinct challenges to U.S. freedom of maneuver in the global commons. According to the ASB office, anti-access (or A2) is defined as “Action intended to slow deployment of friendly forces into a theater or cause forces to operate at distances farther from the focus of conflict than they would otherwise prefer. A2 affects movement to a theater.”<sup>8</sup> From a strategic perspective, this is a quite myopic definition as it focuses solely on military access. In reality, U.S. policymakers need to also be concerned with access to resources and economic activity across the globe.<sup>9</sup> To achieve that access there is certainly a military component that would be part of this greater grand strategy. The strategy to rebalance to Asia-Pacific along with the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement are both indicators that policymakers are addressing the broader definition of access and also, anti-access.

The second aspect of the equation is area denial (or AD), which is defined by the ASB office as “Action intended to impede friendly operations within areas where an adversary cannot or will not prevent access. AD affects maneuver within a theater.”<sup>10</sup> The ASB office rightly concedes that neither A2 or AD are new concepts; however, technological advances and proliferation of advanced weaponry gives potential adversaries greater capability to influence well beyond the littorals than the U.S. has been accustomed to over the last 50 years.<sup>11</sup> The presumption of the ASB concept is that these advances in technology obtained by potential

adversaries will prevent the U.S. military from operating in or as near to areas of interest and may interfere with U.S. military forces movement to or entry into a theater. This problem is not limited to the maritime and air domains, in fact, the land domain is of particular concern due to the vulnerability of fixed forward bases.<sup>12</sup> Historically, overseas basing has been critical to U.S. power projection and has served as a symbol of the U.S.'s commitment to the defense of the host nation. This historical approach to fixed forward bases is one that could and will likely be challenged in the ever-changing area denial environment.<sup>13</sup>

### **Air-Sea Battle**

To address the growing A2 and AD challenges, the DoD introduced the ASB concept as a “limited objective” concept designed to address current and future capabilities of potential adversaries and subsequently inform joint force development.<sup>14</sup> Since the subsequent introduction of the JOAC, ASB has become a critically nested concept that provides a detailed view of adversary technological and operational aspects developed to deny freedom of access to the global commons. Additionally, ASB is intended to inform the joint force on the ways and means necessary to integrate and either symmetrically or asymmetrically shape the A2/AD environment.<sup>15</sup> In other words, ASB is a good start in understanding and addressing the operational component of a strategy to prevent emerging adversaries to gain a technological advantage over the U.S. military and, therefore, have the ability to influence access to regions vital to U.S. national interests. According to the ASB office, the central idea of ASB is to serve as a “solution to the A2/AD challenge in the global commons is to develop networked, integrated forces capable of attack-in-depth to disrupt, destroy and defeat adversary forces.”<sup>16</sup> To achieve this solution, the ASB concept harnesses the application of cross-domain operations across all the interdependent warfighting domains (air, maritime, land, space, and cyberspace) to obtain



operational objectives or create the effects and conditions required for advantage over an adversary.<sup>17</sup>

### **Criticism of Air-Sea Battle**

Criticism of Air-Sea Battle began shortly after the office stood up and initiation of the concept writing began. Fair or unfair, the name of the concept alone gives it a war-like or menacing appearance. Using the word “Battle” to describe an operational concept meant to preserve freedom of access and maneuver for the U.S. and its allies did not sit well with many analysts.<sup>18</sup> Additional criticism relates to the length of time it took the ASB office to release the unclassified overview of ASB and the implementation plan. According to one analyst, it took the ASB office too long to release the unclassified summary of the concept and he argues it was too generic and did not offer the same level of specificity found in two 2010 reports completed by Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) titled *Why Air Sea Battle?* and *Air-Sea Battle: A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept*.<sup>19</sup> Two things need to be considered with this argument; firstly, the classified annexes of ASB contain a level of detail that cannot be officially documented in an unclassified forum; and secondly, the authors of the CSBA report began discussing the topic of A2/AD well before the introduction of ASB, and their scholarship is intended to inform DoD policy-makers. The one area where the CSBA report does diverge from published DoD documents on the ASB concept is the CSBA authors’ willingness to “name names”. Their reports acknowledge the concept was likely developed to counter the rising anti-access strategy and emerging weaponry of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>20</sup>

### **Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAM-GC)**

At the time of writing, the new JAM-GC operational design concept is pending approval by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. JAM-GC is purportedly the new operational concept that will replace the ASB Concept. The ASB office developed under the direction of the Joint Staff (J7). Upon concept approval, the multi-service ASB office will become the JAM-GC office.<sup>21</sup> During an interview with *The National Interest*, the ASB office confirmed the JAM-GC concept would remain the global approach of integrating joint force capabilities to operational access and defeat the A2 and AD threats.<sup>22</sup> According to the ASB office, the JAM-GC concept will maintain global applicability similar to its predecessor and will not focus on any one threat or geopolitical region. According to the ASB office, “JAM-GC will seek to identify capability gaps, provide integrated counter-A2/AD solutions and inform development of a DOTMLPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel and Facilities) array of solutions to such operational challenges.”<sup>23</sup> Additionally, there is a lot of discussion of ASB as a force multiplier for the U.S. to maintain global freedom of action in a fiscally constrained environment.

While service integration and cross-domain interoperability maximize the capabilities of the joint force, taking a geographically agnostic approach could lead to inefficiencies. In other words, countering China’s A2/AD intentions and capacities could require a vastly different approach in training, development and interoperability to the threat posed by Iran in the Straits of Hormuz. For that reason, it seems evident that establishing an approach or a concept directed toward a specific “pacing threat” or peer competitor would offer more efficiency and be more fiscally responsible.

## **U.S. Strategy to “Rebalance to the Pacific”**

The President’s strategy to rebalance the U.S. interests and resources to the Asia-Pacific region comes at a time of a rapidly changing security environment due to economic and military modernization along with an expanded competition for resources.<sup>24</sup> Before exploring the challenges that come with the security environment, it is firstly necessary to understand the intent behind the U.S. strategy of rebalancing resources and reasserting influence over the region. For the better part of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the U.S. heavily focused its national security efforts on the two long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the U.S. began to draw down military forces in the Middle East, President Obama outlined his intent in the 2010 NSS to “...rebalance our long-term priorities so that we successfully move beyond today’s wars, and focus our attention and resources on a broader set of countries and challenges.”<sup>25</sup> The President’s intent to rebalance our economic and security focus to Asia-Pacific is consistent with nearly every administration since the end of the Second World War. In that, the U.S. presence and power projection in the region was and is to prevent the rise of a regional hegemon who could constrain American influence, interest, or freedom of access to sea lines of communication.<sup>26</sup> U.S. economic and security interests in the Asia-Pacific region are significant, and any impediment to U.S. access would be substantial. According to the 2015 NSS, over half of U.S. economic growth will occur in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to economic interests, the U.S. maintains strong allegiance with many Asian-Pacific partners such as Australia, Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines.<sup>28</sup> The U.S. also has seen an unprecedented increase in economic cooperation with China. However, economic cooperation is sure to be challenged amidst growing concerns about China’s claims to territories in the East/South China Seas and their desire to become the regional hegemon. President Obama

addressed the complex nature of the relationship with China as he stated in the 2015 NSS that “We seek cooperation on shared regional and global challenges such as climate change, public health, economic growth, and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. While there will be competition, we reject the inevitability of confrontation.”<sup>29</sup> The administration’s narrative about the rebalance signifies the U.S. will take a “whole of government” approach in the region through diplomacy, educational support and improvements in trade relations. However, regional partners are more fixated on their security relationship with the U.S. and concerns about China’s encroachment on the Spratly Islands and other territorial claims in the South China Sea.<sup>30</sup> As of 2015, there does seem to be a concerted effort by the administration to expedite and expand the “whole of government” approach in the region through the signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).<sup>31</sup> The TPP is a 12-country agreement that features comprehensive market access and regional approach to commitments, addresses new trade challenges, inclusive trade, and is a platform for regional integration.<sup>32</sup> Implied in the agreement is continued reliance on our Asia-Pacific partners (many allied by existing security treaties) for U.S. security presence throughout the region thereby requiring access and freedom of navigation in both the sea and air lines of communication. Simon Sheldon, a noted defense scholar on Asia-Pacific strategy, highlights, “While the architects of the rebalance insist that it is a whole-of-government enterprise, with civilian agencies and activities being as important as the armed forces... nonetheless US military capabilities are seen in the Asia-Pacific as the centerpiece of Washington’s initiative.”<sup>33</sup>

### **U.S. Military Strategy in the “Rebalance to the Pacific”**

As Sheldon suggests, military capability and presence in the Asia-Pacific region is not only an important aspect of the U.S. strategy, but it is also the most resource intensive

component with the greatest capacity.<sup>34</sup> One difficulty in understanding the military role or strategy in the region is that several DoD documents cover this subject. The NSS is the foundation for the overall grand strategy and stresses the importance of the U.S. Asia-Pacific partnership in both economic and security realms. In *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* the Secretary of Defense acknowledges the need for the U.S. military to rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region with an understanding that the U.S. must display a commitment to our allies and partners in the region to ensure economic growth bolstered by security and stability.<sup>35</sup>

In the National Military Strategy (NMS), the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff addresses the recent activities of China in the South China Sea as they are making territorial claims and aggressive land reclamation projects that are inconsistent with international law.<sup>36</sup> It is a message of caution, as there does not appear to be indicators that China is attempting to confront the U.S. or any of its allies directly. The Chairman does acknowledge the strategic importance of U.S. military presence globally but particularly in regions of vital interest to the U.S. national security and prosperity. Recognizing the Asia-Pacific region as a critical theater, the Chairman committed to the rebalance of resources to this region including the most advanced capabilities and a greater capacity that he deemed to be “essential to maintaining regional peace and building capabilities to provide for missile defense, cyber security, maritime security, and disaster relief.”<sup>37</sup>

The final document informing the U.S. military strategy in the region is *The Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy: Achieving U.S. National Security Objectives in a Changing Environment*. According to this strategy, “the Department of Defense has three maritime objectives in the Asia-Pacific region: to safeguard the freedom of the seas; deter conflict and

coercion; and promote adherence to international law and standards.”<sup>38</sup> The strategy provides more details of the various Chinese activities in the South and East China Seas and the role of the U.S. military to maintain freedom of navigation and uphold international laws in the region through presence and routine multilateral operations.<sup>39</sup> It also cautions that rapid military modernization in the region, combined with the territorial disputes, creates a security climate that is ripe for a miscalculation or conflict in the maritime domain.<sup>40</sup> Although this strategy does not reference the Air-Sea Battle concept, it does introduce a set of ideas known as the “third offset.”<sup>41</sup> The third offset is a “suite of innovative ideas and capabilities to advance U.S. military dominance in the 21st century and ensure the United States can deter adversaries and prevail in conflict, including in maritime Asia.”<sup>42</sup> According to the strategy, cutting-edge technology combined with innovative operational and organizational constructs will provide the U.S. with the ability to maintain freedom of access and deny or defeat the A2/AD threat.<sup>43</sup> Finally, the *Maritime Security Strategy* calls for increased U.S. involvement with regional institutions such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF). These forums offer an opportunity to have frank discussions with other regional leaders on security challenges and promote practical multilateral security cooperation in the region.<sup>44</sup>

### **China’s Grand Strategy**

To gain an understanding of the concerns many have over the emerging Chinese technological capabilities and influence in the Asia-Pacific region, it is necessary to understand their grand strategy in the region. China’s political grand strategy has three primary objectives 1) maintain the legitimacy of the regime and ward off any threats to the regime, 2) preserve domestic order, and 3) attain and maintain geopolitical influence as a major regional and world

power.<sup>45</sup> The third objective of China's grand strategy is the most influential to U.S.-Chinese relations as the disputed claims to certain territories is at the heart of the issue. The territorial claims have become a more important issue over the last ten years, as regional power has shifted toward China they have moved from a "good neighbor" approach to a more aggressive approach in resolving territorial disputes. Still, the Chinese regime views Taiwan and (to a lesser extent) Japan as the two primary external threats. Taiwan is perceived as the more direct threat because the Republic of China (ROC) does not acknowledge the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in Beijing as a legitimate government and does not recognize the regime's claim to Taiwan territory. Japan represents more of an indirect threat primarily due to the security alliance with the U.S. The U.S. presence in Japan prevents the CCP from asserting influence over the Taiwanese government making the two external threats interrelated.<sup>46</sup>

To achieve the objectives outlined in their grand strategy and deter their perceived external threats, the Chinese have rapidly improved their naval capabilities along with an improved defense of the littorals. Many analysts view this as an attempt by the Chinese to challenge U.S. sea control in throughout East Asia and, more importantly, challenge the U.S. as the dominant military power in the region.<sup>47</sup> Recent actions by China in the East and South China Seas are also indicators that China is attempting to assert its presence by controlling the near-seas through territorial claims and land reclamation construction projects. By claiming and constructing territory and applying an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)<sup>48</sup> to those territories, China now claims control of activities and resources throughout the region.<sup>49</sup> Although Chinese actions in the region have been incremental, they have already changed the status quo of regional power between China and the U.S. This not only influences regional power, but it also influences regional stability as the Chinese claims directly affect several U.S. allies

economically. In response to Chinese actions in the South China Sea, the U.S. sent a Navy guided missile Destroyer within 12 nautical miles of an artificial island chain.<sup>50</sup>

### **Chinese Naval Modernization**

As these provocations continue to escalate it is necessary for the U.S. to carefully consider Chinese military capability and capacity, especially in the development of an operational approach to counter this influence. In particular, the Chinese have made considerable investment in naval modernization over the past 20 years. These investments and acquisitions include a wide array of platforms and weapons systems ranging from aircraft carriers to anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM). Along with platform and weapon system acquisitions, the Chinese Navy has invested heavily in maintenance, logistics, and other support programs.<sup>51</sup> Chinese naval and air defense systems are developed and are in keeping with a defense in depth strategy should a Taiwan or Japan conflict come to fruition and thereby bring the U.S. into the fight.<sup>52</sup> According to the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), the Chinese navy does have certain weaknesses and limitations such as poor antisubmarine warfare (ASW) and long-range targeting. However, ONI assesses that China is quickly overcoming these weaknesses, and they are more than capable of completing assigned tasking.<sup>53</sup> It is ONI's assertion that the Chinese navy militarization is designed to complete the following missions:

- addressing the situation with Taiwan militarily, if need be;
- asserting or defending China's territorial claims in the South China Sea (SCS) and East China Sea (ECS);
- enforcing China's view—a minority view among world nations—that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its 200-mile maritime exclusive economic zone (EEZ);
- defending China's commercial sea lines of communication (SLOCs), such as those linking China to the Persian Gulf;
- displacing U.S. influence in the Western Pacific; and
- asserting China's status as a leading regional power and major world power.<sup>54</sup>



China's military modernization efforts are clearly of interest to the U.S. and its allies but according to a 2015 DoD report to Congress, China's modernization efforts and technological advances offer limited power projection capability but the priority remains on China's periphery. China does not intend to confront directly the U.S., as they prefer to focus on domestic development and their rise to a global economic power.<sup>55</sup>

## **Why China?**

China's military modernization projects combined with recent activities to assert their presence and influence throughout the Western Pacific are both reasons for concern from not only the U.S. perspective but also regional allies and partners. If the Chinese seek regional hegemony in Asia-Pacific and the U.S. is reasserting its presence and role as the dominant power in the region then, albeit unlikely, the possibility exists for these two powers to resort to military force to settle disputes in the future. There are some ways to prevent the situation from deteriorating to that point through a current whole of government grand strategy for the region. Military presence is a significant part of U.S. power projection in support of such a strategy. If it is deemed accurate that China presents a major threat to U.S. and allied freedom of access and maneuver in the Asia-Pacific region then based on intent from the NSS, the U.S. military needs a concept that will coherently inform joint force integration and capability development necessary to maintain a dominant presence in the region. There are many directives that currently direct U.S. military planning and operations in the Asia-Pacific region. Within DoD, there is the *National Military Strategy, Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense*, and the *Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy*. Combined, these documents sufficiently describe the U.S. strategic approach to deal with the security challenges presented in the Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, informed by that strategic guidance, the JAM-GC concept is the perfect opportunity to synthesize all of this

information to develop a comprehensive military approach in one of the most vital regions on the planet. U.S. must maintain a technological superiority in the event of miscalculation and the onset of a conflict. However, a technologically superior military presence is only one aspect of a holistic strategy to ensure economic prosperity and freedom of access and navigation for the U.S. and its allies.

### **Recommendations**

- JAM-GC needs to be more than just ASB with a less controversial name. JAM-GC should offer specific military capabilities and capacity necessary to secure U.S. national security interest regionally with specific requirements to counter emerging or potential adversaries.
- JAM-GC needs to address the inclusion of partners and allies in the region including the role of multilateral actions, training, capability, and capacity required to deter potential adverse actions and provide assistance should a kinetic action to counter the A2/AD threat become necessary.
- JAM-GC should continue to serve as the source to inform leadership on the necessary advanced weapons and technology that will enable the Joint Force to defeat even the most sophisticated adversary.
- One of the most influential aspects of the ASB concept that should indeed remain in the JAM-GC concept is the focus on integration of forces in contested and denied environments into service training and education curricula. Weapons schools across the services, specifically over the past 10-15 years, were predominantly training for operations in a permissive environment instead of preparing for future challenges. It would be naïve <sup>56</sup>

## Conclusion

The U.S. Defense Department implemented the Air-Sea Battle operational concept in response to emerging adversary capabilities designed to deny access and areas to U.S. forces. Per the ASB unclassified summary, "...A2/AD capabilities challenge U.S. freedom of action by causing U.S. forces to operate with higher levels of risk and at greater distance from areas of interest. U.S. forces must maintain freedom of action by shaping the A2/AD environment to enable concurrent or follow-on operations."<sup>57</sup> In turn, the ASB concept became a global playbook for joint integration and requirements development without a clear objective in the form of a pacing or emerging threat. Without "openly" focusing on a particular region or potential adversary, ASB left many observers wondering why the U.S. was developing a solution in search of a problem.<sup>58</sup> As the Joint Staff develops the new JAM-GC concept, there is an opportunity to evolve the ASB concept into a comprehensive and adversary-focused approach that includes the current construct of joint force integration and capability development but with an eye toward a specific pacing threat. China, for example, is developing a defense-in-depth coastal A2/AD capability that could be a challenge to U.S. military projection in the region in the event of a conflict. As one analyst stated, "Its framers should put JAM-GC in context, showing how commanders will execute it in the China Seas, the Persian Gulf, and other potentially embattled expanses. At a bare minimum, the concept should include language elucidating how JAM-GC fits with governing statements about U.S. policy and strategy."<sup>59</sup> In a time of constrained defense spending, JAM-GC appears to be the right approach to service collaboration and joint force solutions to growing global security challenges. As the Service chiefs of the U.S. Air Force and Navy lamented in 2013, "we cannot simply buy our way out of this predicament by investing in new technologies."<sup>60</sup> If properly implemented, JAM-GC will be the solution to

the A2/AD challenge assuming the concept is developed with a coherent and tailored approach to integrate the joint force efficiently across all domains with application to a specific area of vital interest to U.S. national objectives.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Defense, “Air Sea Battle: Service Collaboration to Address Anti Access Area Denial Challenges,” May 2013.

[www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/ASB-ConceptImplementation-Summaru-May-2013\[1\].pdf](http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/ASB-ConceptImplementation-Summaru-May-2013[1].pdf), 1. (Hereby referred to as Air Sea Battle Summary)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> United States Department of Defense, “Joint Operational Access Concept,” January 17, 2012. Accessed January 20, 2016,

[http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/JOAC\\_Jan%202012\\_Signed.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/JOAC_Jan%202012_Signed.pdf), i.

<sup>4</sup> Air Sea Battle Summary, i.

<sup>5</sup> Admiral Jonathon W. Greenert and General Norton A. Schwartz, “Air Sea Battle,” *The American Interest* February 20, 2012. Accessed January 20, 2016, <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2012/02/20/air-sea-battle/>.

<sup>6</sup> Office of the President of the United State, “National Security Strategy” February 2015. [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015\\_national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015_national_security_strategy.pdf), 24. (Hereby referred to as the 2015 NSS)

<sup>7</sup> Shawn W. Brimley, Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, December 2, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Air Sea Battle Summary, 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ronald O’Rourke, “China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress,” Congressional Research Service (2015). Accessed October 14, 2015. [fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/230967.pdf](http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/230967.pdf), 2.

<sup>10</sup> Air Sea Battle Summary, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Sam J. Tangredi, *Anti-access warfare: countering A2/AD strategies*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2013, 68-69.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Air Sea Battle Summary, 4.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> James Holmes, “Redefining AirSea Battle: JAM-GC, China and the Quest for Clarity,” *The National Interest* November 22, 2015. Accessed November 30, 2015.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-ghosts-airsea-battle-jam-gc-china-the-quest-clarity-14418>, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Harry J. Kazianis, "Air-Sea Battle's Next Step: JAM-GC on Deck," *The National Interest* November, 25 2015. Accessed November 30, 2015. <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/air-sea-battles-next-step-jam-gc-deck-14440> , 2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Defense, "Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy," August 21, 2015. [http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/NDAA%20A-P\\_Maritime\\_Security\\_Strategy-08142015-1300-FINALFORMAT.PDF](http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/NDAA%20A-P_Maritime_Security_Strategy-08142015-1300-FINALFORMAT.PDF), 5. (Hereby referred to as the Maritime Security Strategy)

<sup>25</sup> Office of the President of the United States, "National Security Strategy" May 2010. [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf), 9. (Hereby referred to as the 2010 NSS)

<sup>26</sup> Sheldon W. Simon, "The US Rebalance and Southeast Asia: A Work in Progress," *Asian Survey* 55 (2015): 572. Accessed September 28, 2015. doi: 10.1525/as.2015.55.3.572.

<sup>27</sup> 2015 NSS, 24.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Simon, 574.

<sup>31</sup> Office of the United States Trade Representative, "Summary of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement," Press Release (2015), <https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/press-releases/2015/october/summary-trans-pacific-partnership>.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Simon, 576-577,

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Department of Defense, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," Washington D.C. (2015). [http://archive.defense.gov/news/Defense\\_Strategic\\_Guidance.pdf](http://archive.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf), 2.

<sup>36</sup> Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "National Military Strategy of the United States of America", Washington D.C. June 2015. [http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015\\_National\\_Military\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015_National_Military_Strategy.pdf), 2. (Hereby referred to as the 2015 NMS)

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>38</sup> Maritime Security Strategy, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>45</sup> Review of RAND study [http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB61/index1.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB61/index1.html)

<sup>46</sup> Ian Easton, "China's Military Strategy in the Asia-Pacific: Implications for Regional Stability" Project 249 Institute (2013). Accessed October 13, 2015, [www.project2049.net/documents/China\\_Military\\_Strategy\\_Easton.pdf](http://www.project2049.net/documents/China_Military_Strategy_Easton.pdf), 5.

<sup>47</sup> O'Rourke, 4.

<sup>48</sup> A country's EEZ includes waters extending up to 200 nautical miles from its land territory. Coastal states have the right under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to regulate foreign economic activities in their own EEZs. EEZs were established as a feature of international law by UNCLOS.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Helene Cooper, "Challenging Chinese Claims, U.S. Sends Navy Ship to Artificial Island Chain," *The New York Times*, October 26, 2015. Accessed December 3, 2015, <http://www.adn.com/article/20151026/challenging-chinese-claims-us-sends-navy-ship-artificial-island-chain>.

<sup>51</sup> O'Rourke, 6.

<sup>52</sup> Easton, 9.

<sup>53</sup> O'Rourke, 6-7.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Department of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2015," Washington D.C. (2015). Accessed December 4, 2015.

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<sup>56</sup> Air Sea Battle Summer, 10.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>58</sup> Holmes, 3.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>59</sup> Greenert and Schwartz, 8.

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